

AGENDA ITEM: State Legislation**Legislative Committee Strategy***Visit with Governor's office*

On October 30 Jim Dawe and Susan Steinhauser will meet with representatives from Governor's office to discuss the Library of California and its Board, including a short description of successes already achieved and a list of what the Board has requested of the Governor. Staff will develop appropriate materials and other necessary support for this meeting.

Short-term legislative strategy

The Legislative Committee recommends a four-part short-term legislative strategy for the upcoming year:

1. Fact sheet - Staff will develop a talking points document "*Library of California Fact Sheet*" similar to the CLA Fact Sheet (Exhibit A). It will describe the most current activities of the Library of California program, the benefits to the library community and to library users, long-term goals and current needs. The fact sheet would be updated frequently and distributed to Board members as needed.
2. Identify Board member / legislative linkages – Each Board member will be surveyed to determine their relationship to members of the state legislature.
3. Board members to contact legislator(s) – Each Board member will contact one or more legislators to establish an ongoing relationship between the Board member and that legislator where such an ongoing relationship would be likely to benefit the Library of California.
4. Letters to incoming legislators – Staff will prepare letters for Board to each incoming legislator welcoming them to the legislature and briefly describing the program and its benefits. Each letter will be customized so the legislator will be advised of the regional library network(s) that serves their legislative district.

State Legislative Report

A summary of legislation that was of direct interest to the Board during the last session is included as Exhibit B. Of particular significance was the failure to achieve more funding for the Library of California and the veto of AB 2486, the Board initiative to support youth development and resource programs through tutoring, mentoring, and other informational services. Following is the veto message for AB 2486:

BILL NUMBER: AB 2486
VETOED DATE: 09/30/2000

To Members of the California Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill No. 2486 without my signature.

This bill would appropriate \$2.5 million to the State Librarian from the General Fund to authorize the State Library to award grants on a competitive basis to local libraries. The grants would be used for the establishment of youth development and resource programs through tutoring, mentoring, and other informational services.

Funding for this program is not included in the 2000 Budget Act. Moreover, the Budget already provides for programs with objectives similar to those proposed by this bill. Education and student safety are my top priorities, which is why the Budget includes \$71 million for the Carl Washington School Safety and Violence Prevention Act, and \$87.8 million for the After School Learning and Safe Neighborhoods Partnership Program.”

Two other bills of particular interest to the Board were AB 2757, which would fund telecommunications programs for the visually impaired and SB 1774 which would fund additional hours in libraries and community center computer laboratories for public Internet access. The veto messages follow:

BILL NUMBER: AB 2757
VETOED DATE: 09/29/2000

To the Members of the Assembly:

I am returning AB 2757 without my signature.

This measure would expand funding for telecommunications programs aimed at providing toll-free access and operational costs for the establishment of telephonic reading systems for individuals who are visually impaired.

I am concerned that implementation of this program could negatively affect funding for other important activities within the Deaf and Disabled Telecommunications Program (DDTP). In addition, spending caps within the DDTP could be impacted by the implementation of a telephonic reading system, particularly when there are no complete estimates of the level of use anticipated for these systems. I believe it is premature to enact this measure without the data sufficient to estimate the impact of the program.

I do, however, support actions that enhance the quality of life for blind Californians. Last year, my budget included more than \$70,000 for recreational therapists, \$200,000 for three additional teachers and provided \$200,000 for

Braille transcription at the California Special School for the Blind. I also signed a bill last year that allowed for publishers of instructional materials to provide software for transcription into Braille.

I would be open to a bill next year that would allow the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) to determine, after appropriate review, how the blind could be further accommodated by this fund.

BILL NUMBER: SB 1774

VETOED DATE: 09/29/2000 SEP 29 2000

To Members of the California State Senate:

I am returning Senate Bill 1774 without my signature. This bill would require the State librarian to provide grants to public libraries and public access computer technology centers that have Internet access so that they may extend the hours and days during which the computers are accessible to the public and also provide technical assistance at a level determined by the State Librarian. The bill would also provide an appropriation for each the Department of Education and the "Little Hoover" Commission.

The 2000 Budget Act provides \$56.9 million from the General Fund, an increase of 46 percent from the 1998 Budget Act, for the Public Library Foundation (PLF) Program, which provides public libraries broad discretionary funding for this purpose. Local libraries can use these funds to provide extended hours of operation and technical support. This bill gives top priority to public libraries and public access computer technology centers with "substantial local and private support." The lowest income communities, which also have the greatest need for access to computer technology, would not fit this category. Therefore, it is unclear how this bill would help to bridge the technology gap. Rather, it would result in a costly program that ignores the most needy communities.

Finally, this bill appropriates \$93,000 from the General Fund to the "Little Hoover" Commission and \$250,000 in General Fund to the State Department of Education without an explanation of how those funds would help encourage public libraries and computer technology centers to expand hours of operation and provide technical support.

For these reasons, I cannot support this bill."

Also included is Exhibit C, the California Library Association Summary of Legislation, *Final Bill Summary for the 1999-2000 Legislative Session*, October 3, 2000. This document highlights legislation of particular interest to the California library community.